



MAGYAR MŰVÉSZETI
AKADÉMIA

Művészetelméleti és Módszertani
Kutatóintézet

The Refugee of 1956/68 cultural-scientific workshop

Budapest

Date: 5 September 2016
Venue: Pesti Vigadó

The logo of the Visegrad Fund, featuring a black square with four white dots arranged in a square pattern, and the text 'Visegrad Fund' in white.

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The Refugee of 1956/68

The international cultural-scientific workshop, The Refugee of 1956/68 aims to establish a long-term V4 cooperation in the field of research, which is designed to discover political refugees of the V4 area from various cultural aspects.

The objective of this project is the introduction of this cultural region, the Visegrad states, as an 'interpretive community'. The workshop would like to prove the mutual historical roots, cultural heritage, reveal the interconnections in the artistic field and intensify the traditional coexistence of the member states. Nevertheless, the scientific exchange and research project makes the Slovak, Czech and Polish pieces of art influential parts of the Hungarian culture, and vice versa, the Slovak, Czech and Polish culture will be enriched by the reception of Hungarian artworks. Introducing the emigration extensively in an artistic overview, the Polish uprising, the Hungarian revolution (1956) and the Czech uprising (1968) as characteristic components of the region's cultural remembrance in an intermedial perspective; this scientific exchange project will manifest the strong cultural relationship and deepen the cooperation among these four countries. Artists compelled to emigrate or choose the freedom abroad in the West were citizens of all V4 countries and art world during the Soviet occupation and the dictatorship. Moreover, '1956' and '1968' were symbolic dates for not just the regimes' policies and doctrines, but also for the intellectuals, civil movements and 'counter-presentic myths'.

The initial hypothesis of the workshop

The uprisings in Poznan, Praha and Budapest have created new cultural identities, which were re-written by the refugee and homeland cultures from different point of views.

Programme

9:30 Registration

Panel 1

- 10:00 Opening speech: Falusi, Márton - Windhager, Ákos
- 10:15 Ferdinandy, György: Receptions. Facing down the Wild West
- 10:35 András, Sándor: Making Virtue out of Necessity: Hungarian Literature in the West after 1956
- 10:55 Marcińczak, Łukasz: Attitude of intellectuals associated with the Polish Literary Institute in Paris – the main emigre intellectual centre in the 20th century - towards emigration in the aftermath of 1956 and 1968
- 11:15 Coffee break
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Panel 2

- 11:30 Orság, Petr: Only Vanished Footprints or a Permanent Legacy? Exile media and Central European Public space
- 11:50 Abrahám, Samuel: Emigration and Civil Society
- 12:10 Vajda, Barnabás: 1956-1968 The Czechoslovak Emigration and the Great Powers' Game
- 12:30 Lunch
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Panel 3

- 14:00 Falusi, Márton: Identity Talk in Literary Art World. How did literary representations of the anti-Soviet revolution (1956) constitute new Hungarian political identities?

- 14:20 Mészáros, Tibor: "...Is freedom this big?"
Sándor Márai and 1956
- 14:40 Wróblewski, Bogusław: 'Illusions and Returns' about the
'homecoming' of Polish emigre writers after Polish October
1956
- 15:00 Windhager, Ákos Károly: Musical Memory of the Uprisings in
Poznan, Pest and Prague
- 15:20 Plenary session, coffee break
- 16:30 Az emigráns – The Immigrant
(movie, directed by Györgyi Szalai and István Dárday)
Foreword: Gyöngyösi, Enikő.
- 18:45 Dinner

Abstract

Orság, Petr - Czech Republic

writer, editor and Professor at Palacký University, Olomouc

Only Vanished Footprints or a Permanent Legacy? Exile media and Central European Public space

The period of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia and other Eastern European countries involved a distinct treatment of public space and public communication, among others. The authentic public sphere was completely destroyed by the power-bureaucratic apparatus of the Communist Party. It was replaced by a strictly controlled official sphere that became a space in which the regime enforced official agreement with its doctrines. All those, who disagreed with this new power constellation were dismissed from this sphere. The unintended consequence of this newly established status-quo was the emergence of parallel communication spheres where the part of the public that was suppressed by the power structure struggled to at least establish a limited publicizing of their views. These alternative public spheres began to emerge not only in Eastern European countries, under the strictly limited conditions of the regime, but first and foremost abroad. Eastern European exiles in the West, in terms of their support for these unofficial communication and information spheres, played a defining role in many respects.

This lecture attempts to place publishing activity by Czechoslovaks in exile into the wider Central European context. Refugees began to publish exile periodicals in the West soon after the Communist takeover in February 1948. Initially, this served specifically for providing information to the exile community. Of most interest were those, which perceived their public in the countries behind the Iron Curtain. I would like to focus on several examples from exile magazines that focused not only on the situation in Czechoslovakia, but also dealt with additional issues as well as on developments throughout Eastern Europe. This was specifically the magazine *Svědectví* (Testimony), which was established in the autumn of 1956, at the time of the Hungarian Uprising. The occupation of Czechoslovakia by the armies of the Warsaw Pact in August 1968 resulted in another large-scale wave of immigration to the West. The new exile generation was particularly productive in the sphere of information, publishing and culture in general. *Listy* (Pages), published in Rome, was ranked among the most significant

Czechoslovak exile periodicals. Czechoslovak, Poland and Hungarian immigrants began, however, to move away from closely defined national borders and started preparing projects with an international focus. A number of them actually anticipated development after the year 1989.

Marcińczak, Łukasz - Poland

(1971, Lublin) philosopher and literary historian, Professor at Marie-Curie Skłodowska University, Lublin

Attitude of intellectuals associated with the Polish Literary Institute in Paris - the main emigre intellectual centre in the 20th century - towards emigration in the aftermath of 1956 and 1968

The Literary Institute (Instytut Literacki), a Polish-language publishing house created by Jerzy Giedroyc (1946) and directed by him for almost fifty years, from the very beginning strived to serve as a haven for free speech for the Poles who remained in the country. For the Polish intelligentsia living in PRL (Polish People's Republic) it was the most important emigre cultural institution in Western Europe. The institute gained paramount importance in 1951 when Czesław Miłosz, the first Polish dissident was given refuge by Giedroyc. Miłosz, who had served as a diplomat representing the Polish communist government, published his dramatic "J'accuse" in "Kultura", a monthly journal published by the institute. Since then it became an unwritten rule for all Polish refugees to visit the institute. Embracing of the hunted down dissident intellectual was heavily criticized by the emigre community and the French police warned that the local communists could kidnap him upon the order of the Soviet government. However, this decision was indicative of Giedroyc's attitude and objectives, as he strongly believed that only his fellow countrymen in Poland are capable of attainment of Polish independence, and the only help they need are the books and articles imbued with the spirit of freedom of expression enjoyed by Western societies. The institute also publishes texts smuggled from Poland, giving them a wide publicity. The famous „Open letter to the party" that criticized the political and economic situation of PRL using Marxist analysis can serve as a good example. This way of thinking and the journals and books smuggled to Poland through the Iron Curtain was something the communist elite feared the most. That is why until 1989 Kultura was prohibited in Poland and any contact with the Literary Institute incurred more or less severe punishment.

Polish October (October 1956) – Władysław Gomułka's election as First Secretary of the Party was greeted with hope by the intellectuals associated with the Literary Institute and by the majority of the society in Poland, but the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution, which took place several weeks later, made them realize that the communist regime in Poland cannot be dismantled by means of a revolution. This view was expressed in the article titled *The Hungarian lesson*. "It may be stated with absolute confidence that vis-a-vis Russia we are all alone. No international institution will come to the aid any small or medium country - as could be seen in the case of Hungary [...] For a nation in our situation there is no simple policy. Russia or the United States can afford to make mistakes, Poland or Hungary can't." (Incidentally, the institute also published an anthology of Hungarian writing translated into Polish). Giedroyc was a devoted political Darwinist, but Gomułka's view evolved in the direction that disappointed and disillusioned those who placed their hope on Gomułka's thaw. Marek Hłasko case is symptomatic of this evolution. In the aftermath of the brutally suppressed Poznań 1956 protests, this great writer of the younger generation, one of the first intellectuals who were allowed to cross the Western border, visited the Literary Institute. As a result, he was declared *persona non grata* by the communist regime and was not granted permission to return to Poland; lost in the new reality, Hłasko committed suicide. The Literary Institute was a shelter for the Poles who left their country unable to accept the suffocating atmosphere and censorship; those who decided - or was forced - to stay in Poland, published their texts in *Kultura* under pen names.

The Institute became the intellectual center of the Polish community in exile, trying to analyze the political situation in Europe and redefine the idea of 'Polishness' in the new era, while other emigre centers (especially in London) upheld delusional and anachronistic views. In March 1968 an anti-Semitic campaign was waged by the communist regime using nationalist slogans. Mass protests of students and the intelligentsia were violently suppressed, which resulted in a few waves of emigration of thousands of Poles of Jewish origin, among which were prominent academics and intellectuals: Leszek Kołakowski, Krzysztof Pomian, Leopold Unger and Witold Wirpsza. All of them established a long-term cooperation with Jerzy Giedroyc. Their most important books were published by the Literary Institute.

It is now generally believed that intellectual community associated with the Literary Institute prepared the Polish society for

the attainment of independence in 1989 and the most important Polish writers and opinion journalists (the most influential ones being Czesław Miłosz and Witold Gombrowicz) published their work in Paris, like Mickiewicz, Słowacki i Norwid, our iconic 19th century bards.

Wróblewski, Bogusław – Poland

(1955, Lublin) Professor at Marie-Curie Skłodowska University, editor-in-chief of journal Akcent

'Illusions and Returns' – about the 'homecoming' of Polish émigré writers after Polish October 1956

The year 1956 shook the communist system in Central Europe, which was then completely subordinated to the Soviet Union. Depth of the shock and its consequences were different in each of the countries now forming the Visegrad Group.

The response in Czechoslovakia was the weakest. There, it took until 1968 for real contestations of the Stalinist version of communism to take place.

But in Poland the leadership of the communist party was forced in 1956 to surrender the reins of the government to Władysław Gomułka, who only a few years earlier had been removed from power and put in prison as a supporter of the idea that Poland should follow its own "way to socialism" without blindly copying the Soviet social and political solutions. Poland entered a period of political "thaw", a liberalization in the sphere of politics and culture which lasted several years.

The situation in Hungary was different. The reforms attempted by the government led by Imre Nagy turned out to be too much for the Soviets. In November of 1956 the Red Army brutally put down the uprising of the Hungarians. Almost 200,000 people left the country in the wake of those events. That number included quite a few writers. Those who stayed in Hungary suffered repressions, while the freedom of expression was drastically reduced.

Thus, as far as the conditions of culture is concerned, the situation in Poland after October 1956 was significantly differently from that in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In Poland, socialism "with a human face" seemed possible. The change of the political climate was acknowledged by the West. It was also noticed by the hundreds of thousands of Polish exiles of the war and postwar years. Among them were many writers, who had chosen not to return to their motherland ruled by the communists.

Now some of them decided to come back, even if the price was withholding the expression of their anticommunist views. Within a few years the following writers returned to Poland: Melchior Wańkiewicz (1892-1974) – one of the country's greatest journalists and reporters; Zofia Kossak-Szczucka (1889-1968) – author of novels about historical and contemporary matters; Michał Choromański (1904-1972) – author of experimental psychological novels; Stanisław Cat-Mackiewicz (1896-1966) – controversial publicist and essayist; Teodor Parnicki (1908-1988) – author of a new type of historical fiction.

Their individual decisions to return “home” were based on one of three considerations (or their combination):

- the hope (often illusory) that free expression of one's artistic personality was possible within a reformed socialist system;
- the irrepressible longing for the country of one's birth which one was desperate to quell even if the price was a compromise with the communist authorities;
- the conviction that a writer can only function if she/he is embedded in her/his native language and culture, surrounded by readers whose concerns she/he addresses.

These motivations bring to mind the brilliant poem of Zbigniew Herbert titled “Return of the Proconsul,” which has been translated into many languages (including several translations by distinguished Hungarian poets). It shows the dilemmas of a dignitary longing to return to Rome, now ruled by an unfriendly emperor. The question is: On what terms can one come to an agreement with a tyrant?

Abrahám, Samuel – Slovakia

(1960, Bratislava) Rector of BISLA (Liberal Arts College), editor-in-chief of *Kritika & Kontext*, studied political science and political philosophy at the University of Toronto and at Carleton University in Ottawa.

Emigration and Civil Society

András, Sándor – Hungary

(1934, Nemesvita) poet, philosopher, literary historian. After the revolution (1956) he went into exile. He studied in Oxford, Munich and California, gave lectures at the University of Berkeley and the Howard University in Washington.

Making virtue out of necessity: Hungarian Literature in the West after 1956

The paper considers Hungarian cultural life of the refugees, mostly young, to the West after the 1956 revolution. It acknowledges the exceptional public and private help received in the countries where the refugees landed, as well as the support from earlier exiles there who, in turn, were electrified and fortified by the new arrivals. What has been called 'Hungarian Literature in the West' really came about after 1956, and ceased to be in practice, if not in principle, after 1989. A short sketch is presented of the literary periodicals, publishers, cultural centers in Europe and in North America, conferences and significant regular gatherings. Mention is made of the networks of individual writers who kept lively contacts with each other by correspondence, phone, and personal meetings, and of the equally lively contacts with writers and scholars visiting from both Hungary and the surrounding countries with very large and culturally well-organized Hungarian minorities. Most of them had readings, and quite some of them were willing to publish in periodicals in exile.

Ferdinandy, György - Hungary

(1935, Budapest) writer and literary historian, he went into exile after the revolution (1956), studied, lived and gave lectures in Strasbourg, Puerto Rico and Miami.

Receptions. Facing down the Wild West

Present paper attempts to shed some light on the history of Hungarian exile after 1956. I would like to draw attention to the fact that this problem, the reception of '1956' in the West, is very slightly elaborated. However, I remain a belletrist writer while doing so, present paper is not a study or scientific scrutiny at all. I emphasize the establishment of 'Magyar Műhely' in Paris (1961-1962). The significance that the spirit of freedom meant for youngsters of the revolution after 1956 cannot be overestimated. Moreover, what the 'West' has learnt from us in the meanwhile is also really memorable.

Mészáros, Tibor – Hungary

(1965, Budapest) Márai estate's representative at Petőfi Literary Museum

“...Is freedom this big?” Sándor Márai and 1956

The lecture sheds light on Sándor Márai's (1900-1989) emigre personality, activity in 1956 and reflection in 1968.

In 1956 Márai had already been living in refuge for 8 years, as he had moved from Neapel to New York in 1952. During that period his personality was undergoing a metamorphosis into an émigré Hungarian author, who could foretell by his sensibility the forthcoming changes in Hungary. He wrote in his diary in 1954: "It is such special situation, when a society bears the revolutionary consequences of an undone revolution."

His heart was torn with anguish of despair and weak hope in 1956. As soon as the revolution broke out Márai commented the events from the beginning from New York, later from Munich, Neapel and Rome.

Vajda, Barnabás – Slovakia

Associate Professor at the Department of History, Faculty of Education (University of János Selye), member of the international **Advisory Board** at Professor Csaba Békés's Cold War History Research Center at Corvinus University

1956-1968: The Czechoslovak Emigration and the Great Powers' Game

Falusi, Márton

(1983, Budapest) poet, writer and editor, HAA Research Institute of Art's Theory and Methodology, Budapest

Identity Talk in Literary Art World

How did literary representations of the anti-Soviet revolution (1956) constitute new Hungarian political identities?

After the revolution of 1956 was put down, it became a taboo. Consequently, many strategies were established in belletristic art world on how to speak about the so-called 'sorrowful events' apparently not being spoken about them at all. There were writers who decided to emigrate, or were compelled to do so, not only physically, but also spiritually. Others felt crucial to maintain the continuity of national culture in all circumstances of the public domain, even during the dictatorship, and tried to extend the limit of the regime's censorship. I tend to identify and scrutinize the various counter-presentic cultural strategies in literature, give accurate examples and find the connection between poetic devices, narrative constructions and political identities.

Windhager, Ákos - Hungary

(1975, Budapest) HAA Research Institute of Art's Theory and Methodology, Budapest

Musical Memory of the Uprisings in Poznan, Pest and Prague

The lecture sheds light on the compositions that were written to commemorate the uprisings in Poznan, Pest and Prague. The paper will reveal inspiration of the composers, the hidden program, the censorship's reaction, the audiences' reception and the afterlife of the music pieces. While the novels (like *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by M. Kundera 1984), the movies (like the *Iron Man* by A. Wajda, 1981) can easily remind us of the political events, the music pieces can create emotions of empathy in an abstract way.

In the lecture I am going to reflect on Vaclav Dobias' (1909-1978) *Symphony Nr. 2*, Artur Malawski's (1904-1957) *Hungaria*, Witold Lutoslawski's (1913-1994) *Musique Funebre*, Dmitry Shostakovich's (1908-1975) *Symphony Nr. 11*, Karel Husa (1921)'s *Music for Prague 1968*, Andrzej Panufnik (1914-1991)'s *Sinfonia Eligiaca* and Károlyi Pál's (1934-2015) *Consciousness*. While the pieces are non-programmatic compositions, their relation with the riots is my invention based on their composing circumstances (e.g. date, title, quotation). Thus, I analyse Dobias', Malawski's, Lutoslawski's, and Shostakovich's art works from the Hungarian revolution's point of view. I am going to compare these ones with Panufnik's, Husa's and Károlyi's pieces. Panufnik's symphony is reflected on the victims of *any wars*, Husa's one on the Prague Spring, Károlyi's piece on the Solidatary's activity in 1980.

Despite their dubious atmospheres Dobias' and Shostakovich's symphonies were received well by the contemporary political regimes. The censorship intervened in the following cases: Malawski and Lutoslawski had to modify the titles, Károlyi's piece was forced to remain in his desk till the 1990's. As Panufnik and Husa were living beyond the Iron Curtain they were free to compose and their works were received well.

There are many differences in styles, structures and dramaturgies but the central compositional aesthetics was to emphasise tension. In the period of Socialist Realism, it was a brave political act. Especially, if the tension cannot become harmony.

Az emigráns – The Immigrant

Movie by István Dárday and Györgyi Szalay.

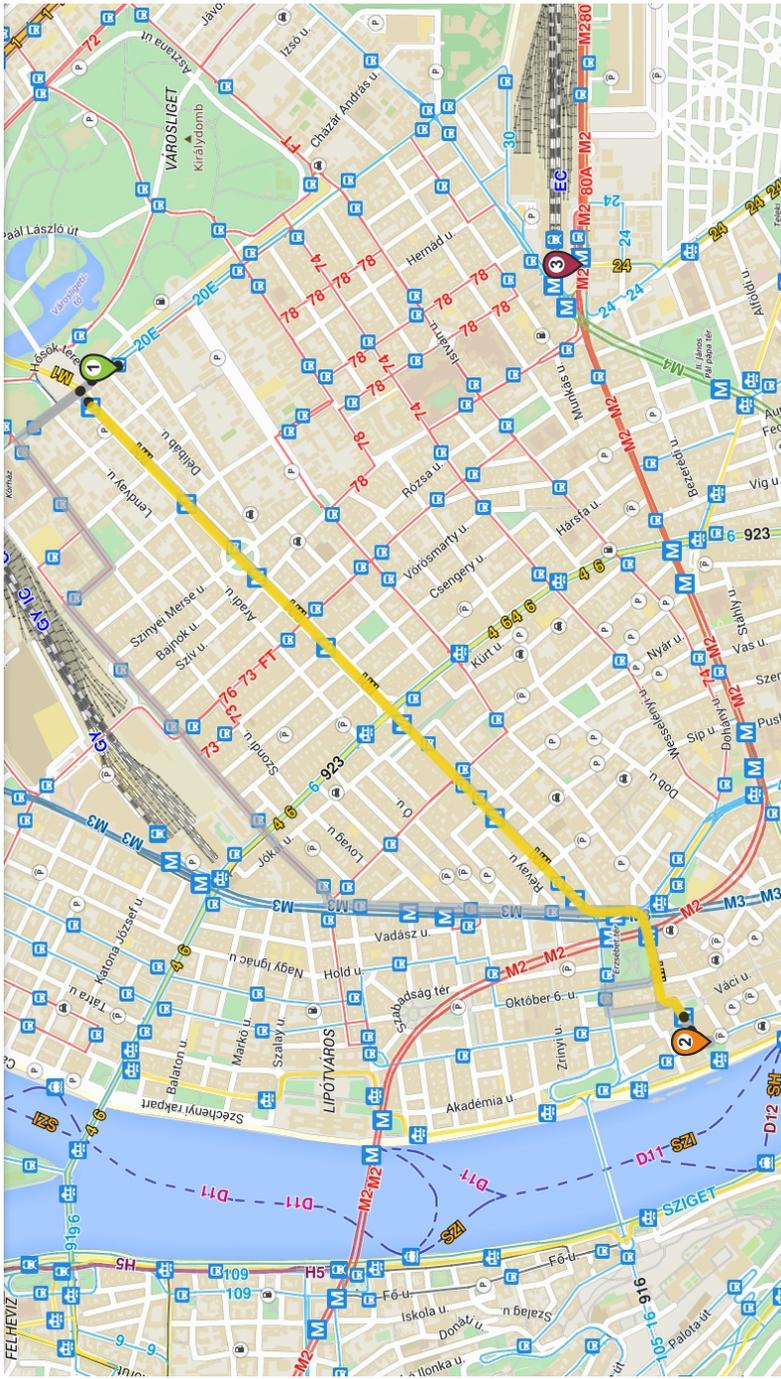
The movie, which reflects on Sándor Márai (1900-1989), who was one of the most relevant writers of the Hungarian literature in the 20th century, asks the usual significant questions of the living artists:

What is the truth? How to tell the truth? Whom to tell it? Finally, how to reserve our language among the strangers?

The movie presents the final years of Sándor Márai's voluntary exile in San Diego, which led to his suicide in 1989. The director spot on Márai's memories as he became more and more disillusioned. The writer's harsh political opinion can be heard as well, but it is only a background for his private life. The production was based on his own diary.

NOTE

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



1 Mirage Medic Hotel**** (Budapest, Dózsa György út 88.)

2 Pesti Vigadó (Budapest, Vigadó tér 2.)

3 Keleti railway station